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Dedication

Dedication to Hugo B. Nicolli (†2020): Pioneer in recognizing the presence and toxicological impact of groundwater arsenic in Latin America

The *Journal of Environmental Science, Health & Sustainability* (Vol. 1 & No. 3) is dedicated to the life and legacy of Dr. Hugo B. Nicolli.

Dr. Hugo B. Nicolli is remembered for his academic contributions, commitment to the well-being of humankind, and his love for science; he was a pillar in the fields of environmental geochemistry, water chemistry, and arsenic in the environment. Dr Nicolli obtained his B.S. degree in geology from the National University of Cordoba (UNC) and a PhD in Chemical Sciences from the University of Salamanca, Spain (USAL). He was a principal researcher of the Argentine National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) and collaborated with the Arsenic Group of the Food Security Network of CONICET. He had multiple collaborations with international groups, especially in Latin America.

Dr. Nicolli was a productive researcher publishing more than 140 high-impact articles and books, which gave him an international reputation in the field of arsenic hydrogeochemistry. Early on his career, in 1985, Dr. Nicolli published a book about the geochemistry of arsenic, which paved the way for additional groundwater and geochemical studies in various regions of Argentina (Córdoba, Tucumán, Chaco, La Pampa), focusing on fluoride, arsenic, and their associated contaminants.

Dr. Nicolli was recognized for his work during his mid- and late career years. These include the MERCOSUR UNESCO prize in Science and Technology in 2011, awarded to him together with other scientists, and his designation as Honorary President of the 5th International Congress "Arsenic in the Environment" in 2014, a congress that gained historical relevance since it provided proof of the widespread, huge problem of groundwater arsenic that was a threat to public health to millions. Because of his research, arsenic was recognized as a contaminant of concern in groundwater in Argentina and then in Latin America. His research was soon tied to research on groundwater arsenic in other parts of the world, allowing him to make connections with researchers internationally, who then formed collaborations to better understand the genesis and chemical mobility of arsenic, and to find potential solutions to the arsenic problem.

Dr. Nicolli will be deeply missed by the many colleagues and former students and will be remembered for his kind and generous personality and his supportive and hard-working nature. Latin American researchers are in debt to his never-failing guidance and friendship. His work did not stop in the detection of arsenic in groundwater but went beyond, to visualize its implications to human and environmental health. In Latin America, his pioneering work transformed the invisible in water into evidence, the silence into words, and the personal worries into collective conscience. His legacy transcends numbers, maps, and publications. He left a message that science is not only an experiment but an act of responsibility and compromise with

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our fellow beings. He taught us to read the language of water, to read in its contained salts and minerals both the geologic history of the planet and the vulnerabilities of those who depend on and drink the water.

Hugo Nicolli was not just a pioneer in his field but a sower of conscience, a lighthouse of clarity and sensibility, with its light pointing to a future where fairness and well-being are the top considerations.

Descanse en paz,

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